



Taller Buildings Equal Bigger Parks in North San Jose

Posted by **Pierluigi Oliverio** on Monday, April 30, 2007

City Hall Diary

San Jose has opportunities to build tall buildings in North San Jose and create large parks at the same time. I am hopeful that we will take advantage of these opportunities so that we can create great places and huge parks.

Currently in North San Jose, we are in the midst of a “build up” for commercial office and transit village housing. I support this for many reasons: jobs, tax base, light rail, and the Guadalupe River Park Trail, among others. Industry leads housing development; thus, I believe we should move forward with land use incrementally.

At the past two San Jose City Council meetings, the council voted to allow two large parcels to be developed into housing off of North First Street in North San Jose. Locating housing next to jobs makes sense. Now an area that is usually abandoned on the weekends will come alive with people, in addition to providing short work commutes.

Coincidentally, Polycom, the world leader in voice and video conferencing, is moving from Milpitas to North San Jose, right next to one of the housing developments. This is great news for San Jose. Polycom designs a physical object which produces sales tax; therefore, Polycom will generate revenue for our neighborhood services.

As a rule, I drive to each land use site that will be heard before the council meetings. I believe that to make a good decision, I must physically go to the site. After visiting the two parcels in North San Jose, I envisioned TALL residential buildings with retail at the bottom and an abundance of park space. Not your regular “tot lot” parks, but extraordinary parks with lots of trees.

North San Jose is the perfect place for TALL residential buildings outside of downtown San Jose. We could have towers encircled by large parks, similar to when you’re at the Children’s Discovery Museum and you look

across the meadow to West San Carlos Street and you see the tall buildings.

With each development there is land designated for park space. Currently most of the proposed buildings in North San Jose are three to four stories over podium parking. This type of building takes a lot of land. If we built higher, we would have more land available for parks. Therefore, we can create large meadows, soccer and cricket fields, and the list goes on.

As we continue with infill housing, we must keep our historic and established neighborhoods intact. A high-rise does not belong in older established neighborhoods. However, in places like North San Jose, I believe that it is okay to build very tall so that we can receive more land dedicated to parks. San Jose needs to make wise decisions regarding our last open space parcels by incorporating retail and great parks.

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